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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

TO THE

PHYSIOLOGY CLASS IN ANDERSON'S COLLEGE,

SESSION 1891-92.

BY

D. CAMPBELL BLACK, M.D.,

L.R.C.S. ED., F.F.P. & S.G.,

SENIOR ASSISTANT PHYSICIAN TO THE GLASGOW ROYAL INFIRMARY;
PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY, ANDERSON'S COLLEGE, ETC.

GLASGOW:

H. HOPKINS, 17 WEST REGENT STREET.
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HISTORY OF MEDICINE
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ЛАБЫЛЫ

“ Difficilis, facilis, jucundus, acerbus es idem !
Nec tecum possum vivere, nec sine te ” !

“ Cha 'n ionnan do phear na neasgaid 's do 'n phear tha ga fàsgadh.”

“ The attempt to get at truth is no doubt a thankless office, and a verie unthriftie occupation; *veritas odium parit*; Truth never goes without a scratch't face; he that will be busy with *vae vobis* let him look shortly for *coram nobis*.”—*A Summons for Sleepers.*

Dedicated

TO

MR. WILLIAM BOND,
MR. ALEXR. W. B. ANDERSON,
MR. WILLIAM JOHN PARSONS WHITE,
MR. DUNCAN FLETCHER,
MR. JAMES S. MONTGOMERY,
MR. ALFRED A. HILL,
MR. HUGH GILLIES,
MR. CHARLES S. EDWARDS,
MR. DAVID ALEXANDER,
MR. JOHN O'CONNELL,
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MR. JOHN GRAHAM,
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MR. STANLEY OULTON,
MR. THOMAS P. POWELL,
MR. WILLIAM R. EVANS,
MR. JAMES FENWICK,
MR. J. WELLS,

THE STUDENTS OF THE PHYSIOLOGY CLASS IN ANDERSON'S COLLEGE MEDICAL
SCHOOL, DURING SESSION 1891-92, BY THEIR SINCERE
AND OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

GLASGOW, 1st December, 1891.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

TO THE

PHYSIOLOGY CLASS IN ANDERSON'S COLLEGE,

SESSION 1891-92.

GENTLEMEN.—It is a custom hallowed by long antiquity, and possibly more honoured, however, in the breach than in the observance, that when a teacher makes his *début* to his class, he is expected to deliver an introductory address, the subject of which, by general consent, ought to be of a semi-professional nature, and, if possible, one engaging attention at the time.* After the magnificent address which you heard last week from the learned Dean of this old, and, I venture to add, honoured and honourable school—an address—and I do not use the language of mere conventional eulogy—which, for elegance of diction, close reasoning, general intellectual culture, and roseate imagination (welling, as I diagnose the case, from a youthful sanguine temperament) would be creditable to any university in this or in any other country; I say, while the reverberation of Professor Watson's stately periods is still ringing in your ears, you can understand at how great a disadvantage I find myself in the endeavour to discharge my present function. Professor Watson's eloquent address was beatifically constructive. The sentiments which I have the honour to address to you will proceed on somewhat different lines—lines with which I am probably more familiar—the

* I desire it to be distinctly understood that neither in manner nor matter are my colleagues, or the Governors of Anderson's College, to be held as committed to anything in this address.

destructive. Both processes are essential in evolution—the one is the complement of the other. "Oh, that mine enemy had written a book!" exclaims the envenomed reviewer of old; "or delivered an introductory address," adds the modern critic. I am thus quite alive to the risks which I run; but I have always considered if there be one luxury greater than another which life has to give me, it is the luxury to think what I like, to learn what I like, and to express what I like, where and whensoever it seems to me expedient to do so; or, as the sentiment is better expressed in the dignified language of Plautus, "*Rara temporum felicitas, ubi sentire quæ velis, et quas sentias discere licet.*"* It is the apostolic injunction to be all things to all men; but I humbly differ even from the apostle, holding that the man who is all things to all men can be very little of anything to himself. And if the luxury of thinking and acting for one's own self be an expensive one, it must not be forgotten that the bounds of liberty are widened, and the good of mankind is advanced over the prostrate forms of reformers. The individual may die, but the race is more and more.

Now, gentlemen, every quarter, I should think, yearly, the din of academic battle and the clash of arms disturb our serenity. The Armageddon of muralism and extra-muralism is being fought at our very doors. Hosts encounter hosts. They close—they fall. The Church militant is there with foaming mouth and gory phylactery, fighting the battle of oppression, which has been ever synonymous with the name of ecclesiasticism. Her hysterical shrieks, as the vulnerable heel is pierced, make night hideous. The defenders of liberty and reform are led by one whose polemical skill and undaunted perseverance must command the admiration of all; whose slogan seems to be "*L'audace; encore l'audace; et toujours l'audace; lapis gutta cavitur non vi sed sape cadendo.*" In modern Athens a commission of potent, grave, and reverend seigniors is sitting in the secrecy of a star-chamber determining the fate and interests of the much-tossed-about medical student. Some of the best legislation of a country consists in the repeal of former enactments, and it is an open secret that the loosening of bonds which never should have been tied is the ostensible object of this Royal Commission. Gentlemen, if there be one thing on earth which should be as free as the winds of heaven, it is the right to impart knowledge, no less

* "Wer die Wahrheit kennet und saget sie nicht,
Der ist fur wahr ein erbärmlicher Wicht."

than the inalienable right, if a man feels so inclined, to make that knowledge a marketable commodity. Nothing is more tenacious of life; nothing dies harder than a corrupt and a profitable monopoly. It is surely superfluous to argue at this time in the world's history that it should matter little to an intelligent or a discriminating public where or from whom a man receives his knowledge, providing he gives satisfactory evidence of the possession of it. To me it is incomprehensible why the right and the fitness to impart knowledge should be determined by the accident that a man's father or his grandfather had rendered service, noble or ignoble, to some prominent or lecherous politician or patrician. It requires no argument to demonstrate that monopolies of every kind are subversive of the best and the highest interests of the people; and that of all monopolies, monopolies of learning are the most wicked and the most indefensible. It requires no argument to demonstrate that such monopolies tend to sloth, corruption, and inefficiency; or that in the matter of learning and intellectual attainments, as in everything else, the fittest should and must ultimately survive. In order that you may arrive at an intelligent comprehension of the aims of university reformers, allow me to present to you as a *point d'appui*, a short glimpse of the early history of the University of this city. The University of Glasgow, the *alma mater*—the *alma proavia*—the dear great-grandmother of so many of us, was established by a bull of Pope Nicholas V in the year 1450. Under this bull the obligation imposed on all graduates, no matter in what faculty, was to teach. The brevium or diploma which they received on finishing their studies constituted them teachers under the name of *Doctores* and *Magistri*. In this, the original charter of the University of Glasgow, it is ordained that those who have finished their studies, and are found duly qualified, shall obtain "Docendi licentiam, ut alios erudire valeant;" and, on referring to the parchment which I received on the, to me, hallowed banks of the Molendinar, I find it declared "*Cuique potestutem damus plenissimam de re Medica legendi, docendi consultandi, scribendi et disputandi in cathedralm doctoralem ascendendi.*" No doubt some wicked people may insinuate that I have all my life-time indulged the "*potestatem plenissimam scribendi et disputandi*," though I have never occupied the "*cathedralm doctoralem*" till now, and that not by the grace of the University of Glasgow. But supposing any other gentleman less aggressive than I—any gentleman of more conspicuous negative virtues than I—

presented himself to the Court or Senate of the University of Glasgow, with that parchment over which many a frugal father has gazed with pride, and many a doting mother shed tears of joy, demanding the right ostensibly conferred on him by the University "*in cathedram doctoralem ascendendi*," do you not think that his temerity would be rewarded by a *descendendi* to the double-quick in the direction of the Western Medical School? The men of learning and the men of sanctity would not dissemble their love, but they would kick him down stairs. Not only were the graduates the teachers recognised by the original constitution of the Universities, but they were *under an obligation* to teach when called upon by the University to do so, so that there might be no disadvantage to the University from want of teachers. The graduates employed in teaching received certain fees from those whom they taught. In order to relieve the students from this burden, and to secure the permanence of distinguished teachers in the University, it was at length enacted that some of the more eminent graduates should receive salaries on the condition of their teaching gratuitously. I venture to state that, if this rule were still in force, we would hear little of the segmentation of classes, or the clamant abuse of so-called "practical" classes. Thus was inserted the thin edge of the wedge in a mischievous monopoly. The obligation on the graduates to deliver lectures was only enforced when a sufficient number of voluntary teachers did not come forward, and hence the granting of salaries dissolved the obligation, for then, as now, the salaried graduates or professors had a keen sense of the dignity and importance of the "dollar." It followed from this, in turn, that when the non-salaried graduates attempted to deliver lectures, they were generally unable to procure auditors, as the students, with an appreciation of coin not less acute, availed themselves of the gratuitous instruction of the salaried professors. The practice of lecturing by graduates became then seldom, and it ultimately ceased altogether. It was soon nearly forgotten; and finally, with that aggressive, oppressive policy which has always characterised the University of Glasgow, the right of graduates to lecture at all was disputed by the professors, and thus, becoming masters of the situation, they began to charge fees, retaining, like good Christians, as a matter of course, their salaries at the same time. Reverting for a little to the Papal bull of Nicholas in 1450, we find that it was given on the application of James II of Scotland, and it proceeds in the following manner:—

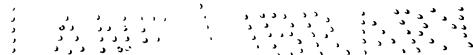
“We erect and establish in the city of Glasgow a general seminary (*generale studium*) for theology, law, arts, and any other lawful study—[finance being, no doubt, included]—*omnia alia licita facultate*. We ordain that the doctors, masters, readers, and students enjoy the same privileges, liberties, honours, exemptions, and immunities as the masters, doctors, and students of the University of Bologna, and that the Bishop of Glasgow, for the time being, be chancellor of the University, and have the same authority over the doctors, masters, and students as the rectors of the University of Bologna. We ordain, with respect to those students who have merited the licence of teaching, *docenti licentiam ut alios erudire vuleant*, in the faculty in which they have studied, and apply to be created masters or doctors, that they shall be presented to the chancellor, who is to take all the steps requisite for the purpose, and if they are found worthy to bestow upon them the honours sought and the licence of teaching.” And the following remarks are *verbatim*:—“Those who, having been examined and approved of at the University of Glasgow, shall have obtained the licence of teaching and the honours before mentioned, from that time forward, without any other examination and approbation, shall have the full and free power of governing and teaching, both in the City of Glasgow and in other universities in which they may desire to govern and to teach, notwithstanding all the statutes and customs to the contrary, although confirmed by oath, by Papal sanction, or by any other kind of confirmation whatsoever. Let no man, therefore, rashly dare to infringe what *we* have erected, constituted, and ordained; and whosoever shall presume to attempt it, be it known to him that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul.” We might well commiserate the professors of Glasgow University, if the indignation of the “blessed apostles, Peter and Paul,” were not now played out; as otherwise, I opine that a good many earless professors would be found promenading the quadrangle.

This charter recognised only the chancellor and the graduates, and the function of the latter is expressly specified to be to teach in the University, and to have a voice in the management of its affairs; and this right only belonged to the graduates engaged in teaching. From this followed a division of the graduates into regent and non-regent, those only engaged in teaching being entitled to the

privileges and appellation of regents. And it is upon a phrase of this charter, it may be observed, that the University of Glasgow long based its right—*in quavis alia licet facultate*—to grant a degree in surgery, in violation of the privileges conferred upon, and enjoyed by, the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. Such was the constitution of the University until the time of James the VI of Scotland, of pious memory. The Reformation caused a centrifugal movement in the dovecots of the University, owing to the natural attachment of its professors to the Church of Rome. (Need I remind you that one of the most munificent benefactors of the University in these days is a distinguished nobleman of the Church of Rome?) James, gathering together the *membra disiecta* of the University, conferred upon it a new charter, which is known as the *Erectio Nova*. In terms of this new charter, considerable funds, derived from the rectory and vicarage of Govan, are granted to the University, and twelve persons are appointed to reside within the walls of the College or University buildings. These twelve persons are the principal, three regents, four poor students, the rector, the servant to the principal, that essential appanage to all cloisters—the cook, and the janitor. The duty of the gymnasiarcha, or principal, was defined to be to teach divinity, Hebrew, and Syriac, to preach on Sundays at Govan, and to have the general superintendence of all the members of the College. The three regents were to receive salaries for teaching; the four poor students must be really poor, and deserving of encouragement; and it is especially committed to the principal to see that the rich be not admitted instead of the poor, nor drones instead of those who might be ornaments to the country. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a poor man now (£2,500 is the sum required) to enter the sacred precincts of Gilmorehill; and, as for drones, the less we say about them the better. Of these charters, all that I can say of them at present is, that the University authorities regard the new one as a confirmation of the older; and it is under the former that the degrees in medicine, until comparatively recent years, and in law and theology, were conferred. The most important change introduced by the new charter was the appointment of three regents, who were to receive salaries from the funds; and the branches of study to be superintended by the regents were specified. The salaried regents, however, were not to be

the only teachers, but the voluntary regents were continued in their privileges, as under the old charter ; for it is expressly enacted that the students, after attending the three salaried regents, shall proceed *ad graviora studia* ; and as no salaried regents were appointed to superintend the *graviora studia*, it is apparent that they were to be superintended by the voluntary regents, as formerly. But now the privileges of regency began to be gradually abrogated. The members of the University appointed four additional professors in Arts and Theology, and the Crown furnished a full complement of professors in the other Faculties. The voluntary regents were repelled, denuded of their ancient privileges, and a wicked monopoly established. "Mental labour," writes my late venerated friend and teacher, Andrew Buchanan — *clarum et venerabile nomen* — "is regulated by the principles that regulate labour of every other kind. If the labourers are numerous, then we have the usual effects of competition, industry, dexterity, and moderate wages. If, on the contrary, the labourers are few in number, then we have, as usual, carelessness, bad work, insolence, and exorbitant demands. And these evils attain their maximum when, as in the Scotch Universities, there is only one labourer, and can be no more. Mental labour is, therefore, subject to the same laws as labour of every other kind, and it is surely alike entitled to the protection of the laws. There is surely no more oppression in prohibiting a man from exerting his thews and sinews in an honest calling than in prohibiting him from exerting the powers of his mind that he may derive an honest profit from the exercise of them. But, say the professors, the magnitude of our classes proves to a demonstration that we are the most capable teachers. "One might just as well say," remarks Andrew Buchanan, "if there were but one ferry boat between Dover and Calais, or between Portpatrick and Donaghadee, that the excellence of the boat was demonstrated by the number of the passengers," or that there is any connection between Tenterden steeple and the Goodwin Sands. For my part, I think that the price of oatmeal in Scotland, and the right possessed by the Universities to confer degrees, is the main factor in the proliferation of these hypertrophied classes.

Now, what University reformers desiderate is a restitution of the ancient rights filched from the graduates—the surely reasonable demand that in the profession of medicine, as in that of law and theology, the members of the profession will



have some part, by right, in the education of the future practitioners, and some control over their entrance into its ranks. But there are other clamant abuses not dreamt of in the commercially primitive days of Andrew Buchanan, and of these, the most outstanding is the segmentation of classes and the invention of so-called practical classes. Admitting the eminence and capability of many of our Scotch professors, I hold they are such in spite of, and not because of, the system under which they are appointed and protected, and that they are no less distinguished in the intricacies of finance than they are in those of science. Since my own student days the number of classes contained in the curriculum has more than doubled, while the expense of study has increased about 75 per cent. In my student days we found that we had quite enough to learn in the time at our disposal, and it is surely absurd to maintain that a competent knowledge of double the number of subjects can be acquired in the same time. I say the same time advisedly, for while an additional session is about to be added to the curriculum, that session is to be devoted to hospital and other practical work. Infinitely too much work is crowded into the present medical curriculum. The idea of a student having to attend 550 lectures or demonstrations per annum, or 2,200 lectures during his entire curriculum, in addition to other work, is positively appalling. The result is, and I have some experience of medical students, that—I say it with all modesty and submission—the modern student is crammed with minutiae and details of really little practical value—with fads and visionary theories—so that during his whole course he is the victim of mental dyspepsia, and is often totally ignorant of the outstanding facts and general principles of medical science as compared with the student of thirty years ago. The remedy is to lop off these excrescences of the curriculum, which serve only to enrich the teachers and impoverish and oppress the student.

Again, this system is faulty in relation to the mode of entrance into the profession, for, no matter how immaculate professors may be—and surely they are all honourable men, with the purity desired in Caesar's wife—the modern student has the impression, be the fact as it may, that his passage through the ivory gates is facilitated by his having attended the practical classes. Is the Crown itself not suspicious of the present system, of the ability of the men over whom it throws its ægis, and of the qualifications which they give? The State virtually says “these men may be all very well for practising

amongst our civilian lieges, but we doubt their ability to practise amongst our sailors and our soldiers, and we must institute a special examination before permitting them so to do." I am not at all unmindful that assessors are appointed to assist at the examinations; but these assessors are the nominees of the University, gagged and fettered by the University, and their value as intermediaries between the profession on the one hand, and the public on the other, is a sham, a delusion, and a snare. These and other concessions, wrung from the University at the point of the bayonet, represent just so much dead cargo jettisoned to enable the frail and crazy barque to weather the storm.

There is another subject on which a commission of enquiry has been recently sitting, and which is of primary interest to the medical profession, and especially to its younger members. I mean the question of hospitals. If I do not tire you, I should like to say a few words on this matter. Since I entered the profession the question of hospitals has interested me; I have written a great deal upon the subject (too much, indeed, for my benefit), and I have consequently followed this investigation with the zest and interest of a veteran. If there be one thing more than another which it has revealed to me, it is the inherent selfishness and the disingenuousness of human nature, and the potency of, possibly enough, the unconscious personal bias. How few of us are able, are magnanimous enough, to take a clear and dispassionate view of a question apart from the manner in which it may touch our pockets! The hospital system in its earliest phases was the outcome of the best impulses of our common nature—our too frequently frail and erring nature. It is erroneously believed by many to be one of the first fruits of the Christian religion. This is not so. Compassion for suffering, as you may learn from Epectetus, Buddha, Confucius, and other noble "heathen," knows neither clime, time, religion, nor country. But, if in the differentiation of things so eloquently depicted by my learned colleague last week, we lose certain organs, why should we continue to mimic or endeavour to exercise the functions of lost and eliminated organs? If, as units of the State, the State relieves us of certain functions, the specialisation should be conceded, and, so far as concerns the individual, be considered abrogated. There is a dissipation of energy in persisting in so doing. If one organ has become evolved so as to do the work of two, then let it do so by all means, if it do so satisfactorily. We have it on high authority

that if two women (and surely they are difficult enough to deal with) be grinding at a mill, one shall be taken and the other shall be left. If I were asked in a word to characterise the outstanding social feature of the time in which we live, I should reply—private oppression; public munificence. Squalor and famine, crime and prodigality, go hand in hand; virtue and vice embrace each other. It is gravely questioned by the foremost thinkers of the age whether, in the numerous ramifications of agencies which we term benevolent, we are not inflicting mischief and injustice on the better portion of mankind, thwarting and dislocating the laws of nature, and of political economy, perpetuating the diseased and the physically unfit, and engendering improvidence, sloth, and even crime, by our lavish and indiscriminating almsgiving. “Like the getting up of companies” [and most of us know what that means in Glasgow], says Herbert Spencer; “the getting up of agitations and of societies is, to a certain extent, a means of advancement. As in the United States [I beg respectfully to interpolate in the United Kingdom too], politics has become a profession into which a man enters to get an income; so here there has grown up, though happily to a smaller extent [this was written a good many years ago], a professional philanthropy pursued with a view to position, to profit, or to both. . . . Every here and there an educated man with plenty of leisure and small income, greatly impressed with some social evil to be remedied, or benefit to be achieved, makes himself the nucleus of an institution, or the spur to a movement, and, since his success depends mainly on the case he makes out, it is not to be expected that the evils to be dealt with will be faintly pictured, or that he will insist very strongly on facts adverse to his plan. . . . Unfortunately agencies established to get remedies for crying evils are apt to become agencies maintained chiefly for the benefit of those who reap incomes from them. . . . The quality of a society is lowered morally and intellectually by the artificial preservation of those who are least able to take care of themselves. . . . Removal of certain difficulties and dangers which have to be met by intelligence and activity is followed by a decreased ability to meet difficulties and dangers. . . . Fostering the good-for-nothing at the expense of the good is extreme cruelty. It is a deliberate storing up of miseries for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing them an increasing population of imbeciles, idlers, and criminals. To aid the bad in multiplying is, in effect, the

same as maliciously providing for our descendants a multitude of enemies. It may be doubted whether the maudlin philanthropy which, looking only at direct mitigations, persistently ignores indirect mischiefs, does not inflict a greater total of misery than the extremest selfishness inflicts. . . . The thoughtless giver stands but a little degree above the drunkard, who thinks only of to-day's pleasure, and ignores to-morrow's pain. . . . Calling for still stronger reprobation is that scattering of money prompted by misrepresentation of the saying that 'Charity covers a multitude of sins.' So says Herbert Spencer, perhaps the most brilliant and most lucid thinker of our age; and I most humbly agree with him. My point is this, following the differentiation so eloquently enunciated by Professor Watson, and conceding *causa argumenti* the expediency of grandmotherly legislation so far, if the State has relieved society of the humane duty of relieving the poor, and taxing the community therefor, why should private individuals interfere with the function of the State in so doing? If two agencies are at work, private and irresponsible almsgiving on the one hand and State charity on the other, is there not apt to be an overlapping, a demoralisation, and an injustice somewhere, especially as, in the matter of medical aid, you are dealing with a commodity—viz., medical skill and education, by which, on the whole, a highly educated and honourable body of men, or at least the great majority of them, are solely dependent to earn a livelihood? Now, what is the attitude of the public towards the hospital system? I venture to assert that primarily it is an entirely passive one. All the hospitals in the kingdom might be wiped out by one coup, and the public would not complain. Most people who support hospitals do so from importunity or from considerations of meretricious respectability. If a successful grocer has a penchant for a knighthood or a baronetcy, and a prefix to the name of "the leader of the opposition" in his family circle, one of his first steps is to endow an hospital, and in so doing he stands, according to Herbert Spencer, "but a degree above the drunkard." Of course this would be a new and an abhorrent view to any respectable and Christian philanthropist. It is said that intelligent Frenchmen in London are totally incapable of understanding the munificence of Mr. Voluntary Contributions. But it may be argued that there is a class of people intermediate between the pauper and the high-wage-earning class who are totally unable to make provision for the obtaining of medicine and medical attendance during illness.

Supposing, again, *causa argumenti*, that there is such a class, will it be seriously maintained that it requires the innumerable hospitals both in and out of the metropolis to meet the necessities of this class? I understand that some two millions of people in London receive medicine and medical attendance gratuitously per annum, and I do not doubt that the proportion is not less in this city. It is a favourite argument with a gentleman on a neighbouring height, that the number of practitioners in this city has not much increased during the past thirty years, while the population has enormously increased, and he thus affords encouragement to the young practitioner. He forgets to add, that for one person treated gratuitously thirty years ago, there must be now ten who receive medicine and medical attendance on this condition. I state it with some humiliation, and as showing somewhat the reverse side of the beatific picture of my learned colleague, that any number of highly educated practitioners are willing to take and compete for medical club appointments for the paltry sum of 2s. 6d. per annum, for medicine (so-called) and medical attendance. Eliminate the class of people quite able to pay this paltry sum for this boon, and it surely must diminish the number entitled to free medical attendance and medicine apart from the State. I go further, and maintain that the individual who cannot lay aside from his earnings 2s. 6d. per annum for such a contingency as medical attendance and medicine is *ipso facto* a pauper, and ought not to be ashamed to be treated as such. Any man in receipt of anything over from twenty to twenty-five shillings per week, who receives medical treatment gratuitously, is thereby demoralised, and the profession is being robbed by any agency, call it what you like, that panders to him in this direction. Surely an income of even 10s. per week can afford 2s. 6d. per annum for medical attendance. Never having held a club appointment, I am free to confess that I see nothing wrong in the club system; it is the principle on which life and other assurance is based, and it is infinitely better to combine for anything than to accept gratuitously that which ought to be honourably paid for. It is at this point that the hospital and the younger and poorer practitioners come in conflict, and the hospital being the stronger, the practitioner comes off second best in the struggle. You have all heard of that Jupiter Tonans in the Strand—the *Lancet*—which affects to hold the destinies of the medical profession in the hollow of its hand, and “which deals damnation” throughout the land to all who

do not bow the knee to its authority and to its etiquette
—whose creed seems to be

“That little villains must submit to fate,
That great ones may enjoy the world in-state.”

Well, the *Lancet* not long ago made the following observations (Vide *Lancet*, 4th April and 2nd May, 1891):—“The great hospital which he” (Dr. Steele of Guy's, at one time superintendent of “the Royal” here) “represents has put on a petty charge for medicine to out-patients, a course which many think but little calculated to bring either hospitals or those who administer them into greater respect. At anyrate, if the people apply the principle of proportion in estimating the value of medical help, their estimate of the value of the ordinary practitioner must be lowered. They must be tempted to say—‘If we can get the learning and skill of Guy's Hospital's physicians and surgeons for threepence, the value of our medical neighbour, albeit a man of education, and one who has been well tormented by the medical bodies, must be something less.’” I admit the validity of this argument as a popular one, and so, doubtless, does our friend, the “medical neighbour;” and, he naturally argues, if people get the services of such men as the physicians and surgeons of “Guy's” for threepence, in order that I may get any patients at all, I must make a still lower charge. Who, then, is to blame for the penny, the threepenny, and the sixpenny dispensary system so rampant in London, and which I certainly regard as an undoubted professional humiliation? But if the value of medical services is estimated by what is paid for them, is threepenny advice not infinitely better than that for which nothing at all is paid? The fact is this, Guy's Hospital physicians and surgeons, and the physicians and surgeons of all large hospitals, give their advice for nothing or next to nothing, and thus rob junior practitioners, seeing that by so doing they are enabled to get enormous fees from the wealthier sections of the community. But is there any exclusive right so to do vested in any section of the profession? Has one man not as good a right as another to treat poor people, and thus get experience and reputation, and consequently, material advantage? To the former of these questions, my answer is an emphatic No; to the latter, an equally emphatic Yes. This, and this alone, is the *raison d'être* of the ever-increasing number of our hospitals and special institutions. If any one of you will take the trouble

to follow the voluminous evidence taken before the Commission on the Hospital System, recently sitting in London, you will find the evidence to be exactly as any man of sense would have anticipated. Physicians and surgeons connected with large general hospitals denounce the special hospitals; the specialists naturally defend the special hospitals; and the men who hold appointments in general and in special hospitals go on the *medio tutissimus ibis* principle. Sir Andrew Clark and some of his *confrères* denounce special hospitals because they have had the good fortune to be sufficiently advertised through general hospitals and the excreta of prominent politicians; and Sir Morell Mackenzie and his *confrères* defend them for a similar reason.

Coming nearer home, what is the state of matters in Glasgow? Since I entered the profession, the number of hospitals and dispensaries in Glasgow has more than doubled. The public attach, and rightly attach as I hold, importance to hospital experience. You can no more expect an accomplished physician and surgeon without experience than you can find a good tradesman without the experience which begets knowledge and manual dexterity. If it be right to treat poor people gratuitously, then one man has as good a right to do so as another. The humblest member of the medical profession has as inalienable a right to found a hospital as the University has. There is not a single medical institution in this city, with the solitary exception of the Royal Infirmary, which does not owe its existence to private medical enterprise. The Western Infirmary is the special institution of the University, and it is carefully kept as its close preserve. With that business astuteness with which the University has always been distinguished, it has secured by charter permanent appointments in the Infirmary for certain members of its staff. To enter into the details of how this has been accomplished, in certain cases, would now be unkind. Having accomplished this, the University throws the onus of maintaining the hospital on the public, who find something like £20,000 per annum therefor. Now, what do the public get in return? It is alleged that they have the appointment of two physicians and two surgeons. Well, these gentlemen—and personally I desire to speak of them with all respect—were the nominees of the University, and they hold their appointments for life. Now, I hold that permanent appointments to such an hospital as "the Western," maintained as it is by public funds, is neither more nor less than a public injustice. It is not fair to

the public, for it is in the public interest that as many members of the profession as possible should have placed within their reach the opportunity of perfecting themselves in professional knowledge and accomplishments; and it is equally unfair to competent young men in the profession, with justifiable and laudable aspirations to a share in these invaluable opportunities. It is time, and more than time, that some nosocomial policeman should give the order:—“Move on, gentlemen.” If there is any one thing more than another, then, to justify the creation of special hospitals in Glasgow, as elsewhere, it is this system of reprehensible and indefensible nepotism. I ask any one interested in this question to examine the staffs of our Glasgow hospitals and other medical institutions, and he will not only find shameful, scandalous plurality of appointments, but that these appointments are all vested in about eighteen individuals, all of whom are *personæ gratae* to the octopus on Gilmorehill.

With your kind indulgence, gentlemen, I would now say something regarding your studies. Up to the middle of the fourteenth century, in Europe every book, including school and prayer books, and every public and private document, proclamation, bull, letter, &c., was written by the hand. The art of printing has, no doubt, on the whole, conferred an immense benefit on mankind, but in many of its modern developments it undoubtedly constitutes an embarrassment and a nuisance. If I had my way of it, I would levy a heavy national tax on so-called poetry, and have a long close time for novelists, while any rhymes which required a dictionary in order to comprehend them, or some celestially minded individual to interpret them, should be considered a criminal offence, and treated as such. Our daily morning papers contain as much reading as our fathers could mentally digest in a week, and not infrequently one paper served for several families. The art of interviewing—an abominable art—was not then discovered, and the appetite for scandal was not whetted. The same thing applies to medical literature. If a man take too much food into his stomach, his digestion is weakened, his liver cells are overwrought and disorganised, and hypochondria, with its thousand woes, results. So it is with too much, and too varied, and too spicy mental pabulum; assimilation is weakened, and the unfortunate victim degenerates usually into a shallow empiric. I therefore adjure you to carefully select your reading; do not attempt too much; above all things, endeavour to master the outstanding facts and general principles, and then the

minutiæ of the details will fall into their proper place, properly concatenated and adjusted in the repertory of your knowledge. Having become masters of the great facts of physiology and chemistry, you are on the first step towards a rational system of therapeutics. Hæckel most properly observes "the immense amount of empirical facts with which the gigantic advances of modern natural science have recently made us acquainted has led to a prevailing inclination for the special study of single phenomena and narrow domains. This causes the knowledge of other paths, and especially of nature, as a great comprehensive whole, to be, in most cases, completely neglected. Everyone with sound eyes and a microscope, together with industry and patience for study, can in our day attain to a certain degree of celebrity by microscopic 'discoveries,' without, however, deserving the name of a naturalist. This name is deserved only by him who not merely strives to know the individual phenomena, but who seeks to discover their *causal connection*." A simple fact is really of little value unless you know and appreciate its correlation to other facts and general principles.*

Such of you as have had any experience of large cities, and especially abroad, are aware, that to master the topography of such city, you mentally map out the prominent buildings and principal thoroughfares. Knowing where these are, you know where to find localities and buildings circumscribed by these boundaries. If you are told that the Quartier Latin, so dear to the medical acolyte, is between the Panthéon and the Salpêtrière, you are not likely, if you know these buildings, to be gadding about for it at Montmartre, or the Champs Elysées. So it is in science. Having mastered outstanding general principles, you know where to search for, and are likely to obtain, new facts. You will do well—it is nigh impossible those days—to distinguish between vital or useful, and trifling or irrelevant details, between ephemeral theories and such as rest on the solid foundation of eternal truth. I remember when I was a student, how lectures were uselessly and un-

* The following may be quoted as an excellent sample of modern pathology:—"Take, as an example, the tetanus-bacillus, from which Brieger (*Berichte der Deutschen Chemischen Gesellschaft*, 1887) has succeeded in isolating four alkaloids—*tetanine*, *tetanotoxine*, *spasmodoxine*, and a fourth [happily] not named. The first causes tetanus; the second tremor, paralysis, and convulsions; the third, chronic convulsions; and the fourth, a flow of both saliva and tears"! Is medical science not coming to a pitch to draw "tears" from all sensible men for its idiotic state?

profitably spun out; the notion of the iniquitous device of multiplying classes was just incubating. Calisaya bark, for instance, and its derivatives are doubtless of immense value in medicine, but what on earth is the use of dilating on the geological features of the country in which the tree grows, whether it is taken to the coast by white or black men, Spaniards or Indians, and whether on the backs of mules, horses, or asses? The subject which I have the honour to attempt to teach to you is full of details. It ramifies into all the sciences; so as the years of man's life are but three score and ten, and as much has to be accomplished in the too fleeting time, we should husband this time with miser care. Since I was a student, the subject of physiology has been invaded largely by natural philosophy and the science of mechanics. An immense amount of ingenuity has been lavished on the description and perfection of delicate instruments in relation to physiological investigations and study. I humbly think that too much time is thus spent. Physiology should be taught to the medical student in its relations to the future exercise of his art. In many cases, at least, it should be sufficient for a student to know that certain results have been obtained, leaving him, if time and opportunity afterwards so incline him, to master the details of the manner in which these results have been reached.

Against three classes of authors I would especially warn you. Firstly, the inventor of new surgical, or medical, for that matter of it, devices. It is a trite axiom that a bad workman never gets a good tool. New instruments are, as a rule, invented as a means of genteel advertising. Not long ago there was an amusing fight in our leading medical journals over obstetric bags (the obstetric art lends itself readily to strife). In the course of my duties in connection with a metropolitan medical journal, I ventured to term this fight "the battle of the bags," and as such it has been pretty well known since. I advised an ambitious obstetric friend of mine in this enterprising city to add a toothpick to one of the bags, and enter the arena of conflict! As the result of my experience, I would also advise you to eschew the writings of the man—often a fashionable and successful practitioner, as the phrase goes—who takes his knowledge of drugs from the advertising columns of our medical journals, and the polite gentlemen who periodically call upon us from manufacturing druggists, and who, without the slightest notion of offence, dictate what and how we are to prescribe. This gentleman

is sure to be constantly ringing the changes on all the newest sesquipedalian drugs of American and Teutonic birth. Polypharmacy and insensate rushing after new drugs are eminently characteristic of the superficial charlatan. *Hic niger est; hunc tu, Romane, caveto.*"*

In an especial manner, next to pestilence and to famine, would I guard you against the "discoverer." Let me tell you solemnly that most things that are new are not true; and that most things that are true are not new. Every now and then we are vexed by new "cures" and visionary systems, which have their day and cease to be. So that the remark of Bacon is a just one, "that the course of medicine is circular rather than progressive." But the other day, what a commotion we had in our midst! The darling sons of science—the new lights to whom an admiring public looked with faith and with hope—were on the stampede to Berlin. "A Berlin! à Berlin!" resounded from Camlachie to Whiteinch. What I ventured to term *Kochspiel* came upon us with the suddenness and the brilliancy of the *Borealis race*, and it has vanished like the frost-work of an autumnal morning, leaving not a wrack behind, save possibly a lingering memory of public folly, medical credulity, and despicable commercial enterprise.† I entered the profession when the greatest surgical fetish of the nineteenth century was in swaddling bands. I have watched with mingled admiration and astonishment the pirouetting of Sir Joseph Lister among our old friends the antiseptics. The antiseptic system, like the Sheriff of Perth, in a sense never dies, for it is never, and has never been, the same thing since I knew it for a single week. It is like Lady Macbeth's dagger—"I see thee not, and yet I have thee still." I have seen Sir Joseph Lister embrace one antiseptic after another, as at length, *par excellence*, the surgical saviour; and I predicted, what has happened, that if Sir Joseph went on at that rate, that we would soon be back to where we were nearly thirty years ago—viz., at our ancient aids, the antiseptics, minus the exploded Listerian doctrine.

* In one recent number of a leading Vienna medical journal the following new remedies (?) are raked together:—Cocainum hydroiodicum, æthelenum bromatum, ammonium embellicum pulv., methylblue, apocodienum hydrochloricum, aurum trisomatum, benzanilid, citrarinum puriss, chloral-ammonium, ephedrin pseudo-hydrochloricum, and a new spirit of bryony!!

† "£16 an ounce for spoilt glycerine, which only caused blood-poisoning, could not be defended on the grounds that the vendor was a scientist whose sole aim was medical progress."—*Med. Press*, 4th November, 1891.

"I want a hero—an uncommon want; for every day brings forth a new one." In Lister's last deliverance, in what is called the Cameron Lecture (the "Cameronian Rant," I venture to call it), if language means anything, Lister has abandoned the spores and bacilli, and the antiseptic system is now back to the dirt from which it sprung. Lister to-day is being praised for his honesty, while intelligent men of science have been ridiculing him for his folly during the past thirty years.

"In science, too, how many a system raised,
Like Neva's icy domes, awhile has blazed
With lights of fancy and with forms of pride,
Then, melting, mingled with the oblivious tide."

Gentlemen, beware of the "discoverer"!

Gentlemen, most of you are on the threshold of your professional life, at the gateway of a profession, than which there is none more contemptible in the hands of a man capable of prostituting it; none more honourable under the broad canopy of heaven in the hands of a man under the influences of truth, dignity, and honour. It is followed, like every other calling, as a means for earning an honest livelihood, let me hope, in most cases. If you desire to reap fortune or State honours, then you should hesitate; you should reconsider your resolve. As a rule, however, the modest want of every day the toil of every day will supply. But if you are worthy of it, you will reap what position cannot attain to, nor the wealth of a Croesus command—

"The consciousness of good, which neither gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss
Can purchase."

I adjure you, be not discouraged by failure. "Every failure," says Whewell, "is a step to success." Like the phoenix from its ashes, the spider constructs from the wreck of his tenement his new gossamer web. The repeated failures of the little ant stimulate him to renewed efforts in the gathering of his frugal store, not careless to provide for future want. The discovery of what is false and what is disappointing should lead you to seek the more earnestly after what is true and encouraging. By failure, the builders on the plains of Shinar found the earth to be their inheritance.

"Standing on what too long we bore,
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies.

“ Nor deem the irrevocable past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks at last,
To something noble we attain.”

Gentlemen, it will be yours to deal with man in his physical and mental infirmity. When the twilight is past, and the shades of eternal night hover around—

“ ‘Tis thine to soothe when hope itself has fled ;
And cheer, with angel smile, the sufferer’s bed.”

Before heartrending appeals for your aid against the inexorable tyrant, Death, you will realise the finiteness of your highest conceptions—the impotency of your holiest endeavours—and humble yourselves in the presence of Him “ who fastened the foundations of the earth, who spread His light upon it, and balanced the clouds in the air ; who binds the sweet influence of the Pleiades and guides Arcturus with his sons ; who gave to the horse his strength, and goodly wings unto the peacock ; and who is king over all the children of pride.” Be this your golden rule in life, and you cannot err :—“ Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

BRIGHT'S DISEASE. London : J. & A. Churchill. Philadelphia : Lindsay & Blakiston.

"This volume comprises a series of six lectures on Bright's Disease of the Kidney, delivered at the Royal Infirmary of Glasgow, and afterwards published in the *Medical Press and Circular*. In the present form they have been revised and amplified, and cannot fail to be acceptable to every busy practitioner who has not time to consult a large treatise. The subject is very interestingly, comprehensively, and practically treated."—*New York Medical Record*.

"I have read your work (Lectures on Bright's Disease) with much pleasure, and consider the book will be most valuable to the student. The facts are put very lucidly, and the reasoning is in a concise form, showing that you must be a good teacher; and I hope you have, or mean to obtain, a lectureship in some good school of medicine."—*George Owen Rees, M.D., F.R.S., Senior Consulting Physician to Guy's Hospital*.

OBSERVATIONS ON THERAPEUTICS AND DISEASE. London : Churchill & Sons.

"Dr. Black is one of those thinkers who ought to be encouraged. . . . We have said that we think such an attempt as Dr. Black's is one to be encouraged. We think so because boldness of thought, and a disposition to handle the problems of disease and of health in a large spirit, are very necessary to that great reform in therapeutics which we all hope to see. There is much ability in his pamphlet, and it will be an immense gain to practical medicine if he succeeds in stirring up our scientific therapeutists to look at questions of medication in a broad way, and in relation to the great physiological states, instead of merely ticketing remedies with specific titles, and inducing the hapless practitioner to discharge them at a supposed peccant organ, as a boy might aim a pea from a pop-gun."—*Practitioner*.

"Dr. Black's essay displays an extensive knowledge of his subject, and though many of his views are necessarily open to controversy, they are well worth consideration."—*Brit. and For. Med.-Chir. Rev.*

"The book shows that its author possesses considerable speculative ability, and that he entertains a healthy hatred of everything savouring of refinement in diagnosis, as well as of all those who, in the pursuit of new remedies and theories, neglect to exhaust the curative capacities of known drugs. . . . It is suggestive, and written with considerable vigour."—*Edin. Med. Jour.*

"We have a thoughtful and carefully written pamphlet from Dr. Black on 'Therapeutics and Disease.' . . . There is a great deal of hard reading in his pamphlet, and we shall not attempt to do justice to the author in tracing his observations throughout. His endeavour is to indicate certain conditions of the system which give, as it were, distinct opportunities for the attack of disease, and then to show how remedies which will cure these diseases do so by restoring the system to its properly balanced state. We are compelled to place Dr. Black's classification thus vaguely, for there is too much in it to analyse it throughout."—*Chemist and Druggist*.

"Your 'Observations on Therapeutics and Disease' I have read with much pleasure."—*Wm. S. Savory, Esq., F.R.S., Surgeon and Lecturer on Surgery, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London.*

"There is no doubt that such an effort as yours will end in that consummation so devoutly to be wished—the putting of the study of the physiological action of remedies on a more rational basis."—*T. E. Thorpe, Prof. of Chemistry, Anderson's University, Glasgow.*

"I have read, and re-read, your pamphlet, and find it excellent."—*J. Hjaltelin, M.D., Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, Knight of the Order of Dannebrog; Chief Physician, Iceland.*

URINARY AND REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS. Second Edition. London : Churchill & Sons. Philadelphia : Lindsay & Blakiston.

"This volume—the expansion, as its author tells us, of a proposed article for the *British Medical Journal*—is evidently written by a gentleman of considerable practical experience, deep thought, and extensive reading. . . . The style of the author is easy and agreeable. . . . On the whole, his work is a valuable contribution to medical science, and being penned in that spirit of unprejudiced philosophical enquiry which should always guide a true physician, admirably embodies the spirit of its opening quotation from Professor Huxley."—*Philadelphia Medical Times*.

"We like the tone of the book though it advocates many propositions not accepted by the profession. Even these, we think, will provoke discussion, and so hasten the time when the functional diseases of the male shall be as carefully studied and treated as those of the female."—*Michigan Univ. Jour.*

"There is so much cleverness, *bonhomie*, and frankness, and apparent honesty of purpose, and distaste for quackery, that hostile criticism is disarmed . . . It is an interesting, original, and will probably prove a useful work. With Chapter IV, begins the real work of the author, on *The Pathology and Treatment of Nocturnal Enuresis and Spermatic Incontinence*. This is followed by a well reasoned and manly discussion of the unsavoury subject. The practical observations on treatment are sensible. The book is nicely got up, and the Table of Contents and Index are admirably arranged."—*Edin. Med. Jour.*

"Dr. Black deserves all praise for the manliness, heartiness, honesty of purpose, and scientific zeal with which he has treated a subject which has become distasteful from its associations, which has been too much shunned by our profession, and which has unfortunately fallen almost altogether into the hands of charlatans. . . . Dr. Black's book contains much useful information, and will doubtless prove interesting to many readers."—*Birmingham Medical Review*.

"This is an important work, showing extensive research, and conveying much information."—*The Doctor*.

"There are some points in reference to the functional disorders of the reproductive system that are continually forcing themselves upon medical men, but which few practitioners care to investigate. Some of these have been fully discussed in this and other medical journals, but unfortunately such topics are apt to be neglected, and hence fall into the hands of those least qualified to discuss them. We have had by us for a long time a volume by Dr. Campbell Black, in which the topics we have alluded to are freely discussed, and which is, perhaps, the best work of reference respecting them for medical men."—*Med. Press and Circular*.

ON THE GERM THEORY OF DISEASE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KOCHSPIEL. (*Some Copies still remain.*)

"Before any new saint is canonised the *advocatus diaboli* must have his say before the Sacred College. Possibly, in arranging for new saints, the *advocatus* is of little practical value, but in medicine of the present day of fads and advertising them, a good strong *advocatus diaboli* is of immense value, and if only listened to might possibly save the profession from running after new follies and bowing down to strange gods. Dr. Campbell Black is a clear sighted, practical man, with an incisive pen and a turn for literature, devoid of reverence for fetishes of all sorts and sizes. He recalls us to common sense, and though he says pretty strong things about the Koch craze and the Pasteur worship, they are said so good naturally that no one's feelings can be hurt, and time is already showing the wisdom of his words."—*Edin. Med. Jour.*

"Dr. Black describes himself as a survival from the ante-microbial age! Would that such survivals (or revivals) were more numerous! We should then have fewer feverish followers after fancied panaceas and puffing advertisements. 'Kochism' is the convulsive stage of a moribund fad. There is already foreshadowed a return to intellectual sobriety, common sense, and the unshakeable principles of physiology, on which alone medicine, as a science, can ever be reared or ever permanently repose.' When that time shall have arrived, the theory that Dr. Black has herein so ably controverted shall have died out, and no more than as a thing of the past shall we hear of 'Kochspiel,' as Dr. Black has designated the theory."—*Provincial Med. Journal*.

"Le Dr. C. Black attaque vigoureusement les théories microbiennes et annonce à leurs adeptes un écroulement à bref délai de leur édifice. Le Listerisme, le Pasteurisme, autant de divagations, dont le Kochisme est la dernière convulsion."—*Le Progrès Médical*.

"Potrei qui citarvi diversi celebri clinichi che sono del mio parere, ma mi limito a trascrivervi, come degna di esser meditata, la chiusura, che leggo proprio adesso, di una conferenza fatta teste alla *Glasgow Medical Society* dal Prof. Campbell Black alla—*The Germ Theory of Disease with Special Reference to Kochspiel, &c.*"—*Professor Semmola, in the Corriero Napoli*.

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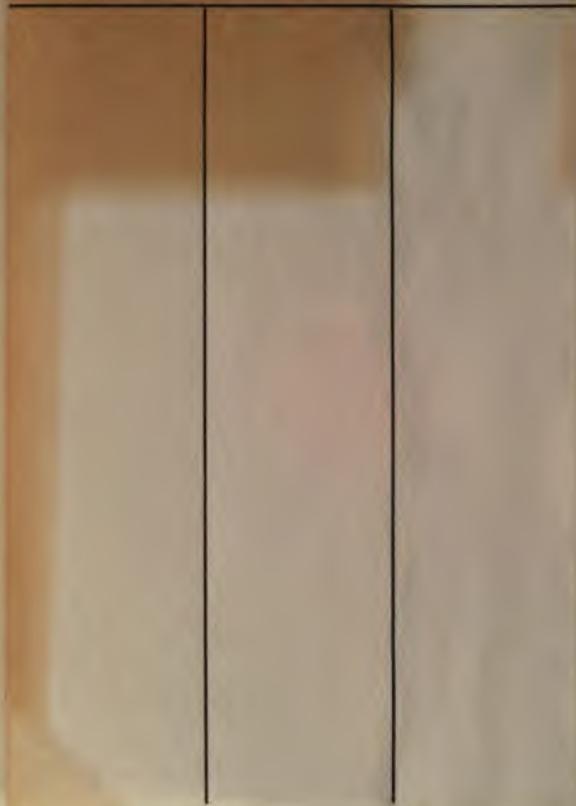
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